What is claimed is:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-17 and add claims 18-20 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An ~~I~~integrated circuit, comprising:

a semiconductor substrate of a first conductivity type;

~~including~~ at least two circuit components ~~(1, 2), which are~~ formed ~~i~~on ~~the~~a semiconductor substrate, where each circuit component is connected between a pair of ~~have a self-contained~~ supply voltages of differing values ~~system;~~, and

~~and including at least one~~ a coupling circuit ~~which~~ connecteds to ~~the same potentials (Vss1, Vss2; Vcc1, Vcc2) of the two~~ a first one of the supply voltages ~~systems so as to intercept voltage spikes~~, where the ~~characterized in that the~~ coupling circuit includes at least one transistor having ~~(T1, T2, T3) with~~ a base ~~(20, 21, 22)~~ of the first conductivity type, ~~and~~ a collector, ~~(15, 16, 17, 18)~~ and an emitter of a second conductivity type, where the base ~~of which~~ is connected through a resistance ~~(R)~~ to the first one of the ~~potentials (Vss1, Vss2) of the two~~ supply voltages ~~systems,~~ and the collector and the emitter ~~of which~~ are connected directly to the first one of supply voltages ~~these potentials~~, and where the emitter and collector each comprise corresponding doping zones of the second conductivity type arranged symmetrically and connected through a surface metallization to the first one of the supply voltages.

2. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 1, where ~~in~~ the base ~~(20, 21, 22)~~ of the transistor ~~(T1, T2, T3)~~ comprises ~~is~~ a region of the substrate ~~(13)~~, and where ~~that~~ the resistance ~~(R)~~ comprises an ~~is the~~ intrinsic resistance of the substrate ~~(13)~~ disposed between the base ~~(20, 21, 22)~~ and a contact doping zone ~~(14, 19)~~ metallically connected to one of the collector and ~~or~~ emitter.

3. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 1~~8~~2, ~~wherein the collector and emitter of the transistor are~~ further comprising at least two circuit components formed in the semiconductor substrate, where each circuit component is connected between the supply voltage and a second supply voltage, where the supply voltage and the second supply voltage comprise differing values.

4. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 1~~3~~, where~~in~~ the coupling circuit includes a plurality of transistors ~~(T1, T2, T3)~~ connected in parallel between the first one of the ~~power~~ supply voltages~~potentials (Vss1, Vss2)~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 4, where~~in~~ each of the transistors comprises a plurality of doping zones ~~(15, 16, 17, 18)~~ of the second conductivity type, where the ~~which~~ doping zones are alternately connected to the first one ~~(Vss1) or the second (Vss2)~~ of the ~~two power~~ supply voltages~~potentials~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 5, where~~in~~ the plurality of doping zones ~~(15, 16, 17, 18)~~ are arranged in an equidistant configuration.

7. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 6, where~~in~~ the plurality of doping zones ~~(15, 16, 17, 18) of the second conductivity type~~ are extended transversely relative to the equidistant configuration.

8. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 7, further comprising a plurality of contact doping zones, where the plurality of contact doping zones ~~(14, 19)~~ are located at the ends of the equidistant configuration.

9. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 8, where~~in~~ each one of the plurality of contact doping zones ~~(14, 19) in the series~~ is disposed adjacent to and is metallically connected to one of the plurality of ~~a~~ doping zones ~~(15, 18) of the second conductivity type which is metallically connected to the zone~~.

10. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 9, where~~in~~ the number of doping zones ~~(15, 16, 17, 18) of the second conductivity type~~ is an even number.

11. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 9 ~~10~~, where~~in~~ the number of doping zones equals ~~circuit has~~ four ~~doping zones (15, 16, 17, 18) of the second conductivity type~~.

12. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim ~~4~~11, where~~in~~ each of the plurality of ~~the at least one~~ transistors is surrounded by a shielding doping zone ~~(23)~~ of the second conductivity type.

13. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 12, where~~in~~ the shielding doping zone ~~(23)~~ is biased in the nonconducting direction.

14. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 12, where the shielding doping zone ~~(23)~~ extends in an annular configuration along the surface of the substrate ~~(13)~~.

15. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 14, where~~in~~ the shielding doping zone includes a highly doped contact zone ~~(25) is formed in the shielding doping zone (23)~~.

16. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 15, where~~in~~ the contact zone ~~(25)~~ includes two islands, each island being ~~of which is~~ conductively connected to a corresponding one of the pair of ~~potentials (Vss1, Vss2) of the two~~ supply voltage~~s systems~~.

17. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 12~~5~~, where~~in~~ shielding doping zone includes the contact doping zones ~~(14, 19) are formed on the shielding doping zone (23)~~.

18. (New) An integrated circuit, comprising:

a semiconductor substrate of a first conductivity type; and

a coupling circuit connected between a pair of terminals of a supply voltage, where the coupling circuit includes a transistor having a base, a collector, and an emitter, where the base is connected through a resistance to the first one of the pair of terminals, where the collector and the emitter are connected to the first one of the pair of terminals, and where the emitter and collector each comprise corresponding doping zones of a second conductivity type arranged symmetrically.

19. (New) The integrated circuit of claim 18, where the emitter is connected through a surface metallization to a first one of the pair of terminals and where the collector is connected through a surface metallization to a second one of the pair of terminals.

20. (New) The integrated circuit of claim 18, where the base comprises a region of the semiconductor substrate, and where the resistance comprises an intrinsic resistance of the substrate disposed between the base and a contact doping zone metallically connected to one of the collector and emitter.